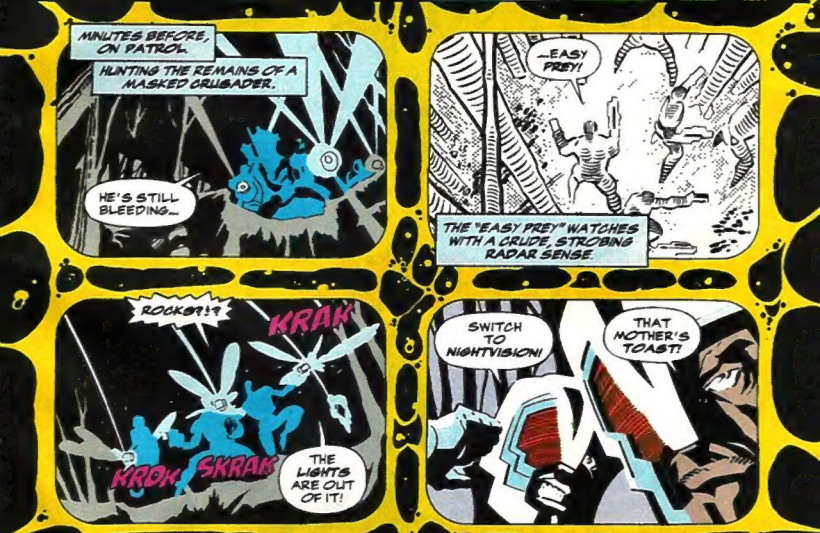
DAREDEVIL

TREE OF KNOWLEDGE FINALE



DAREDEVIL Vol. 1, No. 332, September 1994 (USPS #0276-827) Published by MARVEL COMICS. Terry Stewart, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Michael Hobson, Group Vice-President, Publishing. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. Published monthly. Copyright © 1994 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Price $1.50 per copy in the U.S. and $2.05 in Canada. Subscription rate for 12 issues: U.S. $18.00, Canadian subscribers must add $10.00 for postage and GST. GST # R127092852. Foreign $30.00. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers, and is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed nor in a mutilated condition. DAREDEVIL, its existing all prominent characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof, is a trademark of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO DAREDEVIL, c/o MARVEL DIRECT MARKETING INC. SUBSCRIPTION DEPT. P.O. BOX 1979 DANBURY CT 06813-1979. TELEPHONE # (212) 696-0810. Printed in the USA

AMBIENT ILLUMINATION MAG. 057 LUX
LET'S NAIL HIS HORNHEADED BACKSIDE...
GOT THE S.O.B.-- THERE!
WHY AIN'T HE MOVING?
PRACTICING AT BEING A STIFF. THAT'S WHY! LOCK AN' LOAD, FIRE WHEN--
THE BLIND MAN LISTENS FOR THE HISS-HUM OF ELECTRIC IMPULSES.
HYPERSENSITIVE FINGERS TRACK WARRING CURRENTS IN THE THICK WIRES.
SKZAK!
THE BURST LASTS NO MORE THAN A SECOND.
BUT IT SENDS THE NIGHTVISION SENSORS SCREAMING INTO OVERLOAD.
KRZZKRAAM!
C-CAN'T SEE!
AIIEERGK-- MY EYES!!

THE STORMTROOPERS NEVER KNOW WHAT HITS THEM.
AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN.
BENEATH THE GARDEN, THE PARTLY DISMANTLED HYDRA BASE IS SILENT--
-- NOT COUNTING SIMON VALK'S PANICKED WHIMPERS.
NOW... WHERE DID SYSTEM CRASH WITH CAPTAIN AMERICA?
HIS MIND RACES WITH EXCUSES TO TELL BARON WOLFGANG VON STRUCKER.
O- OUTNUMBERED- WEAPONS MALFUNCTIONED... I'LL--I'LL TELL HIM--
NOTHING.
UP TO YOU HOW TO ANSWER, JACKBOOT. QUICK AND EASY?
OR SLOW AND FULL OF HURT...

CITY HALL, LOWER MANHATTAN.
--AVENGERS' LEADER THE BLACK WIDOW HAS CALLED A PRESS CONFERENCE OVER THE TERRORISM ROCKING THE CITY--
THE ACTIONS OF THESE "SILICON PIRATES" CONTINUE TO CONCERN THE AVENGERS AND GOVERNMENT--
--THREAT TO PUBLIC--
--DEMAND ANSWERS--

MATT MURDOCK LOST HIS SIGHT IN AN ACT OF BOYHOOD HEROISM.
HE MAKES UP THE DIFFERENCE WITH OTHER SENSES WAY OUTSIDE THE NORM.

BEN URICH, DAILY BUGLE.
HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO CHARGES YOUR BRAND OF PROTECTION IS JUST A POLITICALLY CORRECT VERSION OF MARTIAL LAW?

TASTING THE SICKLY SALT SPRAY OF THE RIVER BELOW.
FEELING THE PULSE OF WIND OFF THE WATER.

I EXPECT BETTER OF YOU, MR. URICH!
WE'VE WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE MILITARY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT TO ENACT SAFETY MEASURES -- NOTHING MORE!
FOR GOD'S SAKE, PEOPLE, IT'S NOT LIKE THERE ARE ATTACK HELICOPTERS COMING UP FIFTH AVENUE!

SCANNING THE RHYTHMS OF THE CITY.
HUNTING FOR WHAT THE STORMTROOPER SAID--
--WAILED--
--WOULD BREAK THE PATTERN.

THE WILLIAMSBURG BRIDGE.
ABOUT SEVEN BLOCKS EAST AND 24 SOUTH OF FIFTH AVENUE.
BY D.G. CHICHESTER & SCOTT MCDANIEL
WITH
HECTOR COLLAZO INKER
BILL OAKLEY LETTERER
ANDREANI/JAVINS COLORISTS
RALPH MACCCHIO EDITOR
TOM DEFALCO CHIEF
COLLISION SENSORS ARE HOWLING FROM STARBOARD!
WE'RE LOSING THE CLOAKING FIELD!
THNKAAM!
"It was... my purpose to convince such characters that it would no longer be healthy for them to ply their vocation without being handled roughly..."
—William P. Wood, first head of the Secret Service, on criminal counterfeiters
TREE OF KNOWLEDGE · CONCLUSION
SOFTWARE X

FIELD IS DOWN, KILLOBYTE-- WE'VE GONE PUBLIC! STABILIZERS ARE LAGGIN' FROM WHATEVER HIT US!
WORK WITH IT, TECHNOSPIKE! WE'RE TOO LOW TO THE WATER-- IF WE LOSE IT NOW--
HYDRA'S SYSTEM CRASH. THE REAL FORCE BEHIND THE "SILICON PIRATES" FACADE.
SOWING CHAOS AS A COVER IN THEIR QUEST FOR HI-TECH POWER
WHAT'S HAPPENING?! LISTEN -- THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE! IT'S NOT "WHAT" HIT US -- IT'S "WHO"!
JUST DO YOUR JOB AND KEEP AMERICA DOWN, BITMAP! THE OUTER LOCK'S SECURE -- I'VE GOT TO GET STEALTH BACK ON-LINE!
OUTSIDE THE GUNSHIP.
ENHANCED TOUCH PROBES ICE-SMOOTH METAL.
SEARCHING OUT THE RECESSED PANEL.
EXPLOITING WEAKNESS.
FKAM!
SHORTING-OUT DEFENSES.
KR'ZAAK!

SO MUCH FOR FEELIN' SECURE, KILLOBYTE!
I TOLD YOU TO STAY WITH THE SOLDIER, BITMAP!
YOU'RE OUTTA YOUR LEAGUE, DAREDEVIL!
MUST BE NICE TO DREAM, TROLL!
YOU'RE THE ONE SET THE BOMB ON THE STATEN ISLAND FERRY...
GLKKTKK!
...GUESS YOU MUST LIKE THE WATER! IT'S NICE THIS TIME OF YEAR-- FOR THE HUDSON, ANYWAY!
NYAAAGK!
CIRCUIT CHIP TO MOTHERBOARD! MAYDAY!
WE GOT US A SITUATION HERE, BOYS AN' GIRL...
THAT'LL BE ENOUGH OF THAT!
SLKAANG!

TRTOOM!
THIS IS BETWEEN US AND YOU!
YOUR FRIENDS GET THEIR TURN SOON ENOUGH...
AM I SUPPOSED TO UP AND SALUTE, SOLDIER-BOY?
SEE WHO FOLLOWS YOUR ORDERS WHEN I BURN THAT FLAG OFF YOUR --
YOUR PAL'S TAKING AWAY ALL OUR FUN...
REIN IT IN, TECHNOSPIKE!
YOU IDIOT! YOU'RE GOING TO BLOW THE ELECTRICAL--
SZKOOOM!
I DON'T THINK HE HEARD YOU.

--WITH ITS SYSTEMS COOKED, IT'S GOING DOWN!
I DON'T LIKE LEAVING THEM--
YEAH! SURE, THAT'S IT! REBOOT THE SYSTEM AND--
THIS AIRCRAFT'S STRICTLY FLY-BY-WIRE--
SKEEEE!
WE'VE GOT TO RE-ROUTE THE GUIDANCE PROGRAMMING--
STAYING BEHIND'S THEIR CHOICE, DAREDEVIL--

...AND THEIR FUNERAL.
BACK ON-LINE, KILLOBYTE! PULL 'ER UP AND GET US OUTTA--
SHLUKK!
KRAKADOOM
THE REST OF THEIR TEAM?
TWISTING AN ALREADY SUSPICIOUS TOOL INTO SABOTAGING FREEDOM EVEN MORE!
YOU'VE CARRIED THIS FIGHT FAR ENOUGH, DAREDEVIL-- YOU DON'T HAVE TO TAKE ANY MORE RISKS.
INFOMORPH AND THE OTHERS SPLIT OFF TO FIND THE LINE EATER AND MAKE THEIR PLAY FOR THE CLIPPER CHIP!
GUESS AGAIN, CAPTAIN. YOU DON'T HAVE TO WEAR THE FLAG TO DEFEND WHAT IT STANDS FOR...

LIBERTY SCIENCE CENTER, NEW JERSEY.
HANDS-ON, INTERACTIVE EXHIBITS PROMOTING LEARNING AND THE FREE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS.
A CULT OF SECRECY AT THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY GOT THEIR MITTS INTO THE PLACE BACK AT THE DESIGN STAGE--
-- COVERTLY INSTALLING "LINE EATERS" TO FREELY MONITOR THE PUBLIC'S' MOST PRIVATE MOMENTS.
--OF A SUPER-WIRE TAP EATING INTO A PLACE CALLED "LIBERTY"!
KEEP YOUR INSIGHTFUL GUESS-WORK TO YOURSELF, STEEL COLLAR! OUR FRIEND SPECTRUM NEEDS TO CONCENTRATE!
S'OKAY, INFOMORPH... ALMOST GOT ACCESS TO THE OPERATING SYSTEM AS AVATAR--SUPERUSER!
WHY'D THE NSA PICK HERE?
CENTER OF THE NORTHEAST COMMUNICATIONS GRID, SINCLAIR! PLUS THERE'S NSA SPOOKS PROBABLY GOT OFF ON THE IRONY--
THIS HARDWARE'S SO SEXY-- I COULD SPEND ALL DAY PLAYING WITH IT!
INDULGE YOUR TECHNOLUST LATER -- OUR GOAL RIGHT NOW IS THE CLIPPER CHIP SCHEMATICS STORED HERE!
WE'VE MADE CHOICES LIKE THE ONE YOU'RE ABOUT TO, SINCLAIR... AND LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENED TO US!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS...
YOU'RE-- YOU'RE SERIOUS, COLLAR, AREN'T YOU? WHY CARE ABOUT ME? WHY--?

WHY THIS DELAY?
TEXTURE-MAPPING BARON VON STRUCKER FILE... RENDERING WITH BIO-GOURAUAD SHADING!
SOME WANT CLIPPER IN EVERY PHONE, FAX AND COMPUTER! SECURE COMMUNICATIONS... BUT WITH A GOVERNMENT OPTION TO EAVESDROP AT WILL "FOR THE GREATER GOOD"!
BUT WE CAN ESTABLISH A COUNTER-MEASURE TO CLIPPER'S BACK DOOR! UNBEATABLE ENCRYPTION WE'LL PLANT WITH THE PUBLIC AT LARGE!
DISTRUST WILL TAKE ROOT IN THAT CLIMATE OF SECRECY! ANARCHY WILL GROW AND SPREAD! ONLY THE FITTEST WILL SURVIVE!
ANYTHING FROM THE OTHERS, WIREHEAD?
NO MORE ALERTS FROM "CIRCUIT BOARD"-- JUST ANOTHER TECHNOSPIKE PRANK, I BET!
INSIDE THE MUD-- WIREHEAD'S VIRTUAL IMMERSIVE REALITY.
> A skanky hag shambles toward the magic crystal
>Take Crystal!
TAKE CRYSTAL!
YOU-- YOU CAN'T STEAL IT AWAY, WITCH! THE PROMISE OF THE DATASPHERE... THE MAGIC OF CYBERSPACE...
THIS ISN'T ONE OF YOUR GAMES, WIREHEAD! THE BARON WAS CLEAR ON THE PRICE OF FAILURE!
DO I HAVE TO REMIND YOU AGAIN WHY WE'RE HERE?

THE LAW OF THE LAND SAYS TO BE JUDGED BY A JURY OF YOUR PEERS.
TAKE THAT OPTION. IT'S THE BEST OFFER YOU'RE GETTING TONIGHT.
WIREHEAD'S MUD.
> A mercenary from another era attacks!
> Do you
(A) Talk it over?
(B) Run?
(C) Get the sacred chaingun?
> GET SACRED CHAINGUN!
EAT DIGITAL LEAD, GI-JOE!
THAT'S A WARPED PERSPECTIVE FROM IN THERE, WIREHEAD!
HEATING ELEMENT RUPTURED!
TIME TO OPEN YOUR EYES BACK TO REALITY!
COOLANT LEVEL DROPPING!
NOT VERY NICE, CAPTAIN...
B-LIT I DON'T WANT THE REAL WORLD!
SCOOP IT UP--YEAH! GET BACK IN THE MUD...

...JUST WHAT I WOULD EXPECT FROM AN ESTABLISHMENT DATACOP!
RENDERING AMERICA IMAGE-- ORGANIC-PHONG SHADING!
I'VE SAMPLED YOU TOO! RIDING THAT INFO HIGHWAY'S CLUED ME IN TO YOUR EVERY MOVE!
RADAR ECHOES OUTLINE.
MAYBE WE SHOULD BACK OFF...
SHUT UP, ROBOT! I'M IN COMMAND!
IN COMMAND OF CHAOS? YOU'RE CONTRADICTING YOURSELF, MA'AM!
ETCHING A PATTERN OF ACTION AND STRATEGY.
I'M--NOT--A--ROBOT!!
WORDS COVER YOUR WEAKNESS, SOLDIER! THERE'S SOMETHING EATING AT YOU FROM THE INSIDE...

A LITTLE SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR YOU, "CAPTAIN" INFOMORPH...
SKRAASH!
GARISH DISTRACTION, DAREDEVIL... NOTHING MORE! YOU'VE BEEN WARNED TO STAY CLEAR OF THIS GAME...
TAKING CHANCES COMES WITH THE NAME, LADY...
S-SAMPLE ENGINE OVERLOAD! W-WIREFRAME R-RAY-TRACING--RENDERING--INSECT PATTERN!
...BESIDES, I BRING SUCH NEAT TOYS TO THE PLAY-GROUND!

GET AWAY, WITCH! I'VE ALMOST GOT IT FIXED!
F-FEEL WHAT THEY-- M-MOVING THE WAY THEY-- BECOMING LIKE THEM!
H- HELP ME! FOR GOD'S SAKE, HELP--

N-NEED A NEW FOCUS! GIVE-- GIVE ME YOUR GEAR!
DON'T! I CAN'T STAND IT OUT HERE!
INFOMORPH'S EXISTENCE BORDERS ON TWO-DIMENSIONAL.

I WANT MY OTHER WORLDS BACK!
ONLY BY SAMPLING-- FEEDING OFF OTHERS' PATTERNS OF MOVEMENT AND FORM-- DOES SHE BRING ANY DEPTH TO HER LIFE.

THE MUD IS ANY EXPERIENCE YOU WANT. SENSORY DELUSION ON AN UNPRECEDENTED SCALE.
> You're - trAAAped - MMaze - circuit bOOReds -
> TAKE SCYTHE
SOMEWHERE BETWEEN NEED AND ILLUSION, INFOMORPH GOES A LITTLE MAD.

> Cut a path through the maze!
YOU--YOU DON'T DESERVE WHAT'S IN HERE, WIREHEAD!

THIS ENDS NOW, INFOMORPH!

IT'S BARELY BEGUN, CAPTAIN! THE NEOSILICATE-- A DARK AGE OF CIRCUIT CHIP POWER WHERE YOUR KIND NO LONGER MATTER!
TRY AND DAZZLE ME WITH THAT LIGHT STICK-- I DARE YOU!
YOUR PRETTY SUIT ONLY SAVES YOUR LIFE, DAREDEVIL-- IT DOESN'T SPARE YOU THE PAIN!
THE LIGHT-- BLINDED!
HEY--
--WLKF!
LEAVE HER ALONE, 'MORPH!
ENOUGH WITH YOUR "COMPASSION", ROBOT!
I'M NOT A--
STAND BY TO TRANSMIT CLIPPER FILE...
NO, STEEL COLLAR-- YOU'RE A CRIMINAL! NOT BECAUSE OF ANY SURGERY WE HAD TO BECOME WHAT WE ARE...
...BUT BECAUSE WE LOOKED FOR KNOWLEDGE WHERE THEY DIDN'T WANT US! WE HACKED INTO THE SYSTEM AND THEY LABELED US!
ROUGH SHAPES REFLECT BACK, GAUGING DISTANCE.
TOO LITTLE TIME TO CLOSE THE GAP.

A POISON IN HIS MUSCLES SLOWS THE SOLDIER'S RECOVERY.
CAN'T SEE TO--
CAPTAIN-- YOUR SHIELD!
FOLLOW MY VOICE!
SHEER STRENGTH OF WILL FORCES HIM TO FOCUS PAST THE PAIN--
--AND ACHIEVE WHAT NEEDS TO BE.
THE SECOND HANGS, CRACKLING LIKE THE AIR BEFORE A THUNDERSTORM.
NOW STRUCKER GETS HIS WEAPON... AND THE SYSTEM GETS ITS PAYBACK!
TRAPPED BETWEEN COLD REVENGE--
--AND STERN COMMITMENT
KRTOOM!
TRANSMISSION TERMINATED...

YOUR TURN, STEEL COLLAR...
NOT IF YOU WANT THE GIRL TO LIVE, DAREDEVIL!
C-COLLAR? WHAT ARE YOU--
PLAY ALONG, SINCLAIR... PLEASE! IF THEY THINK YOU WERE BEING FORCED INTO THIS, THEY'LL GO EASIER ON YOU!
LET ME GO! LET ME--
SHE WAS A USEFUL PUPPET ONCE WE TOOK HER HOSTAGE!
SHE'LL MAKE A PRETTY CORPSE UNLESS YOU LET ME WALK!
WE CAN MANEUVER AROUND BEFORE HE--
NICE THOUGHT, CAPTAIN... BUT NO NEED.
BENEATH THE HUM OF SERVO-MOTORS,
THE SOUND OF A HEARTBEAT SKIPPING.
CAUGHT IN A LIE.
YOU'RE LYING.
W-WHAT?! DON'T JERK MY--

YOU'RE LYING. PUT HER DOWN. TELL ME WHY.
LOOK ME IN THE EYE AND I'LL TELL YOU!
THAT'S-- THAT'S NOT NECESSARY.
YES IT IS! LOOK ME IN THE EYE AND PROMISE ME--
--PROMISE ME YOU WON'T LET THE SYSTEM BRAND HER! BECAUSE THAT'S EASIER THAN TRYING TO UNDERSTAND HER CURIOSITY!
AND IF THEY BURY HER DEEP ENOUGH... THE ONLY WAY SHE'LL DIG OUT IS TO BECOME LIKE US!
I PROMISE.
I--I DON'T EVEN KNOW YOUR NAME. YOUR REAL NAME.
IT'S LEE.
GOODBYE...
SKRZAAK!
LEE--NO!
ENERGY FEEDS BACK, TERRIFYING AND UGLY.
GET DOWN!

TURNING WHAT WAS A YOUNG GIRL'S AMUSEMENT INTO A LOST FRIEND'S GRAVE.
SPECTRUM KNEW WHAT SHE WAS DOING.
I HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO THE AVENGERS... TO CALL IN THE AUTHORITIES...
I RESPECT THAT, CAPTAIN... BUT I'VE GOT A PROMISE TO KEEP!
THIS COUNTRY'S BUILT ON THE IDEA OF SECOND CHANCES...
DON'T PLAY ON MY IDEALS, VIGILANTE! IT'S HERS I'M WORRIED ABOUT.
I'LL TAKE ON THAT RESPONSIBILITY.
YOU'RE SOUNDING... A LOT LIKE THE MAN WHO USED TO WEAR THOSE HORNS...
MY MISTAKE. WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN.
I'M... NOT SO SURE...
HEY--DON'T I GET A SAY IN ALL THIS?
NO.
THERE'S NOTHING HARDER FOR A MAN BORN TO DEFEND THE LAW THAN TO TURN HIS BACK.
EVEN WITH THE BEST OF INTENTIONS IT TAKES EVERYTHING HE'S GOT.
AND ALTHOUGH HE'S NOT A RELIGIOUS MAN, STEVE ROGERS--
--HOLDING THE RANK OF CAPTAIN AMERICA--
--PRAYS HE'S MADE THE RIGHT DECISION.

TOP OF THE 66 BUILDING, NEXT MORNING
STYLIZED SPIRES PIERCE THE SKY. THEY LOOK LIKE RADIO WAVES, AND EVOKE A SPIRIT OF COMMUNICATION.
MATT MURDOCK CONSIDERS HOW HE'LL COMMUNICATE THE NEED FOR SINCLAIR SPECTRUM'S FILE TO DISAPPEAR.
CAREFUL. "READING" SO CLOSE...
SHRIK?
...IT'S BAD FOR YOUR FINGERS!
THRAK!
ELEKTRA...
OH, YOU REMEMBER, MATT!
WHO'S YOUR FRIEND IN THE POLICE FOLDER? SHE THE ONE WHO'S TAKEN AWAY YOUR ATTENTIONS?
A LITTLE YOUNG, DON'T YOU THINK?
LET'S NOT START THIS...

NOT 'TILL YOU'VE FINISHED HERE? HOW DOES IT GO, hmm?
LIL' MS. SPECTRUM NO LONGER "OFFICIALLY" EXISTS, AND MATT MURDOCK--
--OR IS THAT "JACK BATLIN?" OR WHAT PASSES FOR DAREDEVIL THESE DAYS? ANYWAY, ONE OF YOU KEEPS HER IN LINE!
YOU TRIED INFLUENCING FACTS WITH YOURSELF--LOOK HOW THAT'S TURNED OUT! YOU FAKE THIS CON-MAN BATLIN ROLE--
--BUT HOLD TIGHT TO THE DAREDEVIL NAME! YOU GAVE UP ON MURDOCK, MATT--
--YOU GAVE UP ON ME. WHY NOT THE REST?
I DON'T NEED THIS!
MAYBE YOU DO. MAYBE YOU NEED A REMINDER.
WE TRAINED FOR SOMETHING ONCE, MATT... BEFORE WE BOTH TURNED!
BE READY TO STAND UP TO THAT CHALLENGE AGAIN--OR BE READY TO STAND OUT OF MY WAY...
THEN ELEKTRA'S GONE, SILENT AS SHE CAME.
HER NINJA WAYS INVISIBLE TO EVEN HIS SENSES.
ALL THAT'S THERE NOW ARE THE STREETS OF NEW YORK-- HIS STREETS-- LICKING WOUNDS FROM THE RECENT WAR.
SOMEDAY, THAT TWISTED GRID MAY BE AN OFF-RAMP ON THE VAUNTED "INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY."
BUT TECHNOLOGY ON THOSE STREETS WON'T JUST BE CUTTING EDGE. IT'LL BE GOUGING-MAIMING-BLEEDING EDGE.
AND MATTHEW MURDOCK WILL BE THERE AT THE FRONT LINES TO DEFEND THE CITY THAT'S IN HIS SOUL.
LOG OUT.